

DURHAM PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Date of Report: 12-16-11

City of Durham (DPR)/Durham Public Schools (DPS) Joint Use Agreement

City Council approved a proposed joint use inter-local agreement between the City of Durham and Durham Public Schools for shared usage of each other's facilities in the provision of programs. The agreement allows for greater use and efficiency of both city and county facilities increasing recreational opportunities for the Durham community.

Community Camp Fires

DPR established the "Community Camp Fire" events to provide opportunities for communities to come together to enjoy Durham's parks and facilities. Event organizers provide the fire, hot chocolate and everything needed to make s'mores and participants share a campfire experience with others in their community. DPR hosted this new community outreach program in Durham Central Park, Old North Durham Park, Solite Park, Duke Park, Northgate Park, Piney Wood Park, Twin Lakes Park, Cornwallis Road Park, Leigh Farm Park, Campus Hills Park, Whippoorwill Park, American Village and Edison Johnson Recreation Center

Campout Carolina! Jamboree

DPR, REI of Durham and Frog Hollow Outdoors presented an old-fashioned camping jamboree at the historic West Point on the Eno Park in October 2011. 68 campers joined together for this statewide event that included mini-events throughout the evening, such as a professional storyteller by the campfire, a flashlight scavenger hunt and a birds of prey educational exhibit with the Piedmont Wildlife Center.

Open Forums

DPR's recreation program staff hosted a series of "Open Forums" inviting the community to provide feedback on the services, programs and activities available at the centers. Edison Johnson Recreation Center, the Community Family Life and Recreation Center at Lyon Park, WD Hill Recreation Center and the Mature Adults, and Special Program Units, are among the many entities that hosted forums in 2011.

Mural Project – Holton Career and Resource Center

Dr. LeAnne Disla from Duke University's Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies in conjunction with Durham Public Schools and DPR completed a Mural Project in July 2011 at the Holton Career and Resource Center (HCRC). Hillside School students from the history and art class with the guidance of several artists painted one of the walls at the HCRC. The coordinator spent the week of 7/11 interviewing long time residents in the area to capture the rich history and long standing traditions. There was one resident that had autographs from Fredrick Douglass, Jimmy Carter and Martin Luther King Jr.

Free Water Safety Program

In August, DPR partnered with Safe Kids of Durham County to host a free Water Safety Program for citizens. The program was held at Edison Johnson Aquatic Center on August 15-19, 2011. It included a water safety presentation for parents, which taught them the importance of being "water watchers" while their children are swimming or playing near water. They were reminded that children drown without a sound, and it is up to them to prevent their children from drowning. In addition, their children received a week of swimming lessons. This program served 48 children, ages 4-12, and their parents. Safe Kids also donated 24 life jackets valued at over \$400 to be used at the Edison Johnson Aquatic Center.

Playground Safety Surfacing

DPR recently developed and began implementing a replacement schedule for safety surfacing in our playgrounds. With over 50 playgrounds in the City, this was no small task. The proposed plan, which will address all City

playgrounds over the course of the next few years, also includes required annual funding to sustain the required surface levels in future years as well.

While some of our playgrounds are in great shape, others have safety surfacing that is decomposing and provides very little cushioning for the children that use the playgrounds. In these cases, we have to remove the old material, reline the playground with landscape fabric, and then install the new material. The majority of our playgrounds are surfaced with Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF), which we can have installed by a blower truck. This method is much more efficient than the previous method of delivering EWF to the playground, and only requires a staff of 4-5 to manually spread it. We have also been establishing an inventory of the other types of surfacing installed at City playgrounds and will be planning the repair and replacement of those in the next year or two.

Third Fork Creek Trail

Third Fork Creek Trail is the longest section of the North/South Greenway, the City's main greenway trail. It is 3.2 miles long and runs between Southern Boundaries Park and Garrett Road Park. It was completed this year with a combination of bond funds and ARRA stimulus funding, providing a major connecting link in the trails system.

Parks and Recreation Month in DPR

July is Parks and Recreation month and DPR observed the month by encouraging residents to enjoy Durham's parks, trails, playgrounds, pools, and natural areas. The theme this year was —Rock Your Park!

The observance is part of the National Recreation and Park Association's goal to raise awareness about the vital impact that parks, recreation, and conservation have on communities across the U.S. For the entire month of July, Durham encouraged residents to create a healthy weekend habit by getting out to a park, trail, recreation center, playground, swimming pool, or natural area.

DPR Hosts USTA Tournament

- Durham Parks and Recreation hosted the USTA North Carolina Mixed Doubles Championship Tournament September 15-18, 2011. The tournament included 1400 registered athletes as well as their friends and families.

DPR Play More Day

September 24, 2011 was the "DPR Play More Day," as proclaimed by the Mayor at the September 6, 2011 City Council Meeting. DPR hosted two events the grand re-opening of the I.R. Holmes Sr. Recreation Center at Campus Hills Park and the Latino Festival.

- The grand re-opening celebration was a great success with over 200 citizens in attendance. In addition to providing tours of the renovated facility, DPR staff provided information about programs at the center and had a special display about being named a "Playful City USA" for the third year in a row. The event concluded with a "Community Camp Fire" hosted by the Adventure Programs unit.
- The Latino Festival originally scheduled to take place at Rock Quarry Park on August 6, 2011 was postponed until September 24 due to heavy rain. Rainy conditions during the week leading up to the festival forced organizers to move the event to Edison Johnson Recreation Center. Approximately 2000 community members attended the event.

High Ropes Discovery Course at Bethesda Park

- DPR's High Ropes Discovery Course at Bethesda Park is now open! The grand opening took place on Wednesday, June 8 at 4:30 p.m. The ceremony included words from the mayor and those involved in the project, including adventure programs staff and the designer of the course. The grand finale of the program came when the Director of Durham Parks and Recreation, Rhonda B. Parker, sailed off the top tower on the zip line with red ribbons trailing behind her. Once she landed, the ribbons were officially cut and eager onlookers lined up to test their courage and balance while navigating the course under the direction of well

trained and certified DPR staff. The discovery course is now open for groups by reservation, or for individuals on —Discovery Days.

Downtown Dog Park

DPR opened the Downtown Durham Dog Park in conjunction with the Cleveland Holloway Neighborhood Group. A cooperative agreement between the City and this organization was implemented.

Leigh Farm Park: 370 Leigh Farm Rd

With 96.1 acres, Leigh Farm is a park that is not only recreational and fun, but promotes education and conservation through unique partnerships.

Between 1992-1994 the City of Durham, state agencies, and a number of conservation groups joined together to purchase this portion of a 500 acre farm originally owned in 1834 by Richard Stanford Leigh. The collaboration created a natural resource based park with a historic component. The historic component is based on the records and artifacts of the Leigh family that have survived for over 165 years.

The park is also home to the Piedmont Wildlife Center a nonprofit agency that provides essential resources to ensure the health and welfare of native wildlife. This includes education, conservation, and promoting the native wildlife that have been injured and need rehabilitation.

In addition to the hiking trails available, the Durham & Orange County Recreation Disc Association DORDA built a disc golf course that includes two levels, Recreational and Advanced/Pro. Both courses share 12 fairways. According to their website, the course is scored 3.29 out of 5. The construction of the course began in 2009 and is still a work in progress.

One other group at Leigh Farm is SEEDS; their volunteers will be installing a heritage garden on site.

Sandy Creek Park

DPR, along with a number of agencies including DOST, New Hope Creek Advisory Committee, and the Audubon Society, are developing an environmental learning center that is certain to become an oasis for bird watchers and butterfly enthusiasts. Originally a sewage treatment plant owned by the City of Durham, Sandy Creek Park has undergone a remarkable transformation from its earlier days. It now serves as a key access parcel for the New Hope Creek nature corridor. A 0.7-mile biking and walking trail hugs the Sandy Creek from Pickett Road to the end of Sandy Creek Road. The trail and surrounding wetlands are teeming with wildlife and vegetation that is sure to capture the eye of all visitors. In 2010, the area was deemed a birding hotspot by ebird.org. A novel partnership has been established with the Duke ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) Clinic to develop the area according to ADA guidelines, thereby allowing individuals with neurological challenges to enjoy the park to its fullest. DPR received notification from NCDENR of a \$5,000 award from the Adopt a Trail grant program. Funds will be used to renovate the old bridge at Sandy Creek Park. September 2011.

Keeping Up with Trends - Futsal

DPR staff are keeping up with the trends in athletics with the creation of a —futsal pitch at Sherwood Park. Futsal is a variation of soccer that was created in South America in the early 1930's and is played with five players on a side in a smaller, walled soccer pitch. Great soccer stars like Pele and Bebeto acquired their famous skills playing futsal. The game is fast, exciting and has an international following—the world futsal organization claims teams in 112 countries and millions of members. The U.S. Futsal Federation (founded in 1981) first entered a team into the Futsal World Cup in 1984. About 1,100 Boys and Girls Clubs have active futsal clubs in this country alone. Though futsal is played under the auspices of FIFA, the world soccer organization, it has some differences that change the game: 5 players instead of 11, unlimited substitutions instead of a limit of 3, a 20 minutes half instead of a 45 minute half, a smaller ball, no offside rule – and of course, the smaller pitch. Other rule tweaks, like restrictions on contact, keep the speedy game under control. Check out the web site of the US organization (www.futsal.com) and check out the new pitch at Sherwood Park. That site will also have lights soon, for evening play.

NATIONAL AWARDS – DPR

National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) recognized DPR with two (2) national awards. The awards will be presented at the NRPA Congress and Exposition in Atlanta in November 2011.

- The Bimbé Cultural Arts Festival was selected by the National Recreation and Park Association to receive the 2011 Dorothy Mullen Arts and Humanities, Class II Award. The Dorothy Mullen Arts and Humanities program honors the most innovative and effective arts and humanities programs across the nation. Entries are judged on the basis of content, innovation, contribution to the community served and expansion of interest in the arts and humanities.
- Bethesda Park was selected by the National Recreation and Park Association to receive the 2011 Park or Facility Design Award, Class II. The Park or Facility Design Award is presented to the designer and jurisdiction that manages an innovative park or facility, which benefits the community, region, etc., serves as a model facility or park in its inclusiveness and responsiveness to the needs of the local community or region.

2011 Playful City USA community designation

- KaBOOM!, a national non-profit dedicated to bringing play back into children's lives, honored Durham, NC as a Playful City USA for the third straight year. The honor is Durham's ongoing commitment to play and "for being a pioneer in play, investing in children, and believing in the vision of a great place to play within walking distance of every child in Durham, North Carolina."

U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Honorable Mention City Livability Award

- The City of Durham has received an honorable mention from the U.S. Conference of Mayors for the innovative development and launch of the Holton Career and Resource Center, a project resulting from the successful collaboration between the City, the County of Durham, Durham Public Schools, and Duke University Medical Center.
- According to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Honorable Mention City Livability Award recognizes Durham's effort to breathe new life into Northeast Central Durham with a state-of-the-art vocational school, recreation center, and community clinic that improves the lives of thousands of students and community members who use the services provided there every day.
- The 2011 City Livability Awards Program is co-sponsored the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Waste Management, Inc. For the past 32 years, the City Livability Awards Program has been one of the most competitive programs sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Each year, hundreds of mayors and their city governments submit applications with a wide range of programs to compete for the honor of calling themselves a City Livability Award winner.
- Durham was awarded the Honorable Mention City Livability Award for cities larger than 100,000 in population size. The City Livability Awards are presented in two population categories – 10 awards for cities of up to 100,000 people and 10 awards for cities of 100,000 or more. In each category, one first-place award, four outstanding achievement awards, and five honorable mentions were granted. By receiving an honorable mention, Durham joins only nine other cities to be recognized this year for their innovative and successful programs that improve the quality of life for its residents.
- According to Mayor William V. "Bill" Bell, the recognition of the Holton Career and Resource Center illustrates how the community's collaboration to transform this abandoned, dilapidated middle school built in the 1930s actually transformed this neighborhood and the residents who call Northeast Central Durham home. "The Holton Career and Resource Center is a partnership in every sense, with community involvement from the building design phase all the way to the programming of daily operations," Bell said. "Aside from providing much-needed services, the Center is now a magnet for positive activity for all

residents. It's an outstanding example of a successful public-private partnership and the things we can accomplish in this community when we work together. I'm proud of this accomplishment, and as one of the winners in this competition, I believe the independent panel of judges that selected Durham for this honor could see for themselves what makes this project so successful and special."

- The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,192 such cities in the country today. Each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. For more information on the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the City Livability Awards, visit www.USMayors.org/CityLivabilityAwards. For more information about the Holton Career and Resource Center and the programs and services provided there, call (919) 354-2750.

STATE/LOCAL AWARDS – DPR

North Carolina Recreation and Park Association

- Congratulations to the special events team are certainly in order. DPR recently received the Arts and Humanities Award from the North Carolina Recreation and Park Association for its CCB Plaza Third Friday Concert Series. The award was presented on November 15, 2010 at the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association Conference held in Raleigh, North Carolina. The CCB Plaza Third Friday Concert Series began in 2008 and was created to attract citizens to the newly renovated streets of downtown and to expose them to the new and existing businesses in downtown Durham. The six month series is held from April-October in conjunction with Third Friday Durham and includes a performing and visual art component. Jazz, rock, Caribbean, Latin, hip hop, spoken word and indie rock are among the many music genres showcased. During Third Fridays in Durham, citizens enjoy music and tour the many art displays at local art venues and businesses. Since 2008, participation has increased and hundreds of people gather on the plaza to enjoy music at artistic performances, according to Rhonda B. Parker, director of DPR. "We are excited to receive this award because it is an indication that we are providing activities and events that our citizens want and enjoy," said Parker. The 2011 Third Friday Concert series will begin in April 2011.

Special Olympics Durham County

- Special Olympics Durham County has chosen Durham Parks and Recreation as the 2011 Outstanding Corporation (more than 101 employees). The award will be presented at the Special Olympics Durham County Annual Awards Banquet held on Thursday, October 27, 2011.

Individual/Staff Awards

- On Monday, September 12, 2011, Ann-Marie Strike, M.S., LRT/CTRS, *Recreation Assistant Supervisor (Special Programs/Inclusion- Mature Adults)* received the 2011 North Carolina Recreation and Park Association Young Professional Award. The award was given to her in recognition of her outstanding service and leadership in the professional organization and community.
- On Friday October 21, 2011, Rosalie Bocelli-Hernandez, *Sr. Community Relations Coordinator (Latino/Hispanic Outreach)*, received the prestigious **Latino Diamante Award** in the *Arts and Culture Category*. The Latino Diamante Awards is a statewide program designed to recognize the achievements of groups and honor people who are making significant contributions to the well being of Hispanic residents in North Carolina.

Grants

- DPR received a \$5,000 grant from Blue Cross/Blue Shield of NC Foundation for a Community Gardening Program. The funding will provide a secure storage unit at Edison Johnson Recreation Center and an inventory of gardening tools and supplies for DPR programs.
- 2011 United States Tennis Association Diversity Grant in the amount of \$2,004.
- DPR received a grant in the amount of \$600 from the United States Tennis Association for tennis equipment to be used for lessons offered at Elmira Park. The goal is to introduce tennis to youth that area in urban

areas and may not have access to the sport. Youth who complete the six lessons will receive their own racquet and can of balls.

- DPR received a second year of funding from the Carolina Panthers Charities for its Challenger Flag Football League. September 2011
- DPR received notification from NCDENR of a \$5,000 award from the Adopt a Trail grant program. Funds will be used to renovate the old bridge at Sandy Creek Park. September 2011.
- The City of Durham, through the efforts of DPR staff and the Human Resources Department was awarded one of ten \$10,000 grants to support our celebration of Independence Day from Liberty Mutual Insurance. This grant supported the expansion of the fireworks display at the DBAP. The City won the Liberty Mutual Insurance Bring Back the 4th™, an online contest. The program gave residents the opportunity to work towards a positive common cause and a chance to earn much needed funding for the event.